

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPC
Council Chamber Cavan Co Council
25th October 2016

Present: Mr Eoin Doyle Director of Service
Ms Marcella Rudden, A/ Head of Enterprise
Mr. John Donohoe, Chief Officer
Ms. Caroline Brady, Administrative Officer
Cllr. Eugene Greenan, Cavan County Council
Cllr Peter McVitty, Cavan Co Council
Ms. Nikki McGoohan, Cavan Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Chris Kirk, Cavan PPN

Apologies: Cllr John Paul Feeley, Cllr Carmel Brady and Cllr Sarah O'Reilly

At the outset of the meeting Mr Eoin Doyle conveyed apologies from Cllr John Paul Feeley Chairperson of the SPC. In his absence Cllr Peter Mc Vitty chaired the meeting.

1. Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr Eugene Greenan, seconded by Ms Marcella Rudden minutes of meeting held on 20TH September were approved.

2. Matters Arising:

Mr Chris Kirk referred to the discussion which had taken place at the SPC meeting on 20th September relating to Killykeen. He referred again to the fact that there was an opportunity to develop Killykeen for respite care for people with special needs - he cited similar UK models that had worked well as viable enterprises and had created a number of jobs also. In response Cllr Peter Mc Vitty stated that if any such model were to be proposed then the HSE would also need to part of such

discussions. Mr Eoin Doyle said that any productive use of Killykeen was more than welcome, however Coillte were not in the business of providing accommodation, in such a proposed venture they would get a commercial operator to come to try to make it work. He reiterated the fact that Cavan Co. Council did not own Killykeen, it was owned by Coillte and while the Local Authority would continue to work with them to get the best possible outcome it was ultimately up to Coillte to decide what they would do with it.

3. Update from Mr John Donohoe, Chief Officer on implementation of Local Economic and Community Plan.

Mr John Donohoe presented the committee with a comprehensive update on the Local Economic and Community Plan. Notwithstanding the fact that it was still relatively early days in terms of the implementation of the plan, much had been achieved. Following on from the presentation a number of comments were made in respect of same. Cllr Eugene Greenan welcomed the update and noted it was disappointing that the media were not present - this was a 'good news' story and highlighted all that had, and was, being achieved by Cavan Co Council. He mentioned in particular that in terms of visitor numbers we outdid many other counties who had similar Tourism offerings. He referred also to the Town Teams and how the Municipal District Funding would assist towns and communities. Ms Nikki Mc Goohan said that the progress report highlighted the huge amount of work that was being done that people 'don't know about'.

Mr Chris Kirk referred specifically to the Tourism aspects of the LECP. He said that angling accounts for 33% of overseas markets and that the decline in sterling will affect anglers. He said it was important that we examine why people come to Cavan and the reason that they return. He referred also to the importance of the Geopark and that our aim should be to increase numbers by 50% not 10% - he said that communities had a strong role to play in this regard. He suggested that the Events Guide produced by the Geopark was not representative of communities. He mentioned in particular Swanlinbar and the opportunities that could be developed here relating to the local mineral/spa waters.

Cllr Peter Mc Vitty again reiterated that the LECF progress report highlighted many positives. He referred to the importance of fishing in the county and that there was an opportunity to further develop our fishing stands. He also said that there were opportunities for local communities to get more involved. It is difficult for the Local Authority to do everything, communities need to get more involved and to drive some initiatives. It is hoped that the Tourism Strategy currently being prepared will highlight these opportunities and encourage more community involvement.

4. Update on current and future LEO activities, Ms Marcella Rudden Cavan Local Enterprise Office

Ms Marcella Rudden A/Head of Local Enterprise Office provided a comprehensive update to the committee regarding the LEO. She referred to the fact that the LEO provide some 30 enterprise related training programmes. 500 participants had availed for this training to-date in 2016.

The LEO also offers a Mentoring Programme for entrepreneurs. The programme is tailored to meet company's requirements. Mentoring is provided by someone outside of the County and some 160 sessions are provided each year.

In terms of Enterprise promotion, Cavan based company Ualto were regional winners in the National Enterprise awards. A number of local secondary schools also partake in the Student Enterprise Awards however it was noted that it is becoming more difficult to get secondary schools to engage in this initiative. The LEO's were also represented at this year's National Ploughing Championships, Scott Ciders received an award at the event. Irelands Best Young Entrepreneur has also been launched. This competition is run by the Local Enterprise Offices, and the winners at county level will be eligible for an investment in their business of up to €25,000, while the winners at national level can receive an additional investment of up to €50,000. Investments in winning businesses will be determined according to business prospects and investment needs. Mentoring, marketing and other supports will also be available to participating businesses at various stages of the competition. Cavan based Alicia Traynor is an entrant in this year's competition.

The LEO also has a key role to play in promoting the 'Trading Online Voucher Scheme' - this scheme encourages businesses to incorporate online trading into their business model. Through workshop based programmes businesses are encouraged to embrace online trading and in some cases this may mean taking on additional staff.

Local Enterprise Week will be launched in January 2017. The LEO also supports national events such as International Women's Day, Diaspora events and more recently Brexit has resulted in a request from the LEO network to provide additional support to companies who are struggling with Brexit.

The Target Programme is an initiative between CITC and South West College, this initiative highlights the importance of fostering cross border collaborations, and collaborations between industry and 3rd level Educational Institutes.

At the end of the presentation the Committee thanks Ms Rudden for her presentation and commended the work that the LEO does in supporting local enterprise within the County.

5. Food Strategy update

Caroline Brady provided an update to the committee regarding the Food Strategy. A draft Strategy had been circulated prior to the meeting – she referenced a number of recommendations from the strategy including the following:

1. Appropriate resources both financial and staff resources must be put in place to ensure the successful implementation of the strategy
2. A strong Cavan Food Brand needs to be developed and promoted – Taste of Cavan is already in place and therefore there may be no need to develop a new brand however this needed to be explored further and is a key recommendation in the strategy
3. Taste of Cavan brand (or whatever brand name is decided upon) must encompass the entire county – not just Cavan Town and the 2 day Taste of Cavan event.

Following on from the update it was proposed by the committee that the key to the success of the strategy was provision of a staff resource to drive the

initiative forward. It was agreed that this would be communicated to the Senior Management Team.

6. AOB

Mr Eoin Doyle referred to the forthcoming USEFE event – ‘Invest for Success’ which was taking place in Dublin on 3rd November. The event proposes to showcase successful businesses from across the Upper Shannon Region and provides an opportunity to hear about job opportunities, business growth and tourism in the region. This event is hosted by Cavan, Leitrim, Longford & Roscommon Local Authorities, in conjunction with Bord na Mona and the ESB.

7. Date and time for next meeting

Tuesday 13th December @ 9.30am

Signed : _____

Chairperson

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Secretary

Date : _____